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FLOOR DEBATE

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and Nancy. I have great respect for your work in this Legislature. Now I'd like to say a word about your senior member. Long ago, Senator Chambers and I rallied behind a piece of legislation that was proposed to assist a single individual who had been wronged by our state. Following the passage of that bill, the senator paid an unannounced visit to my office to express his appreciation. I have never forgotten that visit. So I use this occasion to publicly thank Senator Chambers for reminding us of our responsibility to care for the less fortunate in our society. I also see among you new acquaintances. The broad backgrounds and enthusiasm of our freshmen senators are sure to contribute to the depth of the debate. Whether you're beginning your 1st year or your 35th year of service, you were elected to serve in this capacity because you've demonstrated a commitment to our state. I share that commitment. Together, I believe we can look ahead with vision and accomplish much for our citizens. It is quite likely that our state will never again have so much collective knowledge and experience present within this respected Chamber. You have a unique opportunity to leave a lasting legacy. By extending your focus beyond the needs of today to anticipate the future needs of Nebraska, you create a solid foundation to build upon when the torch is passed to decision makers of tomorrow. I am also presented with a unique opportunity. I come to this post because a great honor has been given to our 38th Governor. A resounding sense of pride is beaming from the citizens of our great state, knowing that the nation's agriculture sector now has a man of wisdom and integrity at the helm. Equally important, the farmers and ranchers of our state and our nation now have an advocate who will speak passionately on their behalf. Soon, the nation will know what the citizens of Nebraska have long known, that Secretary Johanns will prove worthy of the confidence expressed in him by our President and the United States Senate. As we wish him well in his new post, I become the first Lieutenant Governor in 45 years to assume my new post by operation of our state constitution. That fact only intensifies my determination to provide effective and insightful leadership. I will do everything in my power to earn the trust, respect and confidence of the citizens of this great state as I begin my tenure in this new capacity. I promise you this: I will not shy away from difficult issues. I am committed to